



The 36th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

## Year in Review

2018-2019



January 2019

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## Preface

The past year has been a busy year for the SCC. It was dominated by two major themes, that of the pay cut and GSDM. For the first time in 41 years, two days of strikes were observed at the Palais to say no to the dictates of the ICSC. The prevalence of these two themes has not prevented the SCC from fighting for better working conditions and for the promotion of staff well-being in the workplace. Our working conditions are under tremendous threat at a time when the Organization is undergoing reform and facing significant challenges. That is why it is very important to stay united. This report is a concise summary of what we have done for you, thanks to you and through you. Do not forget that in essence you are the SCC and without your support it would not be able to meet your expectations.

Prisca Chaoui  
Executive Secretary  
UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

This was the Council's busiest year in recent memory, during which we were able to demonstrate the strength and unity of staff in the face of adversity. Your actions over the last twelve months have set in motion some important reforms and changes that will hopefully stand us in good stead for the future. This therefore is your report, a report that shows that the staff council is nothing but for its staff. I hope you enjoy reading about the Council's work and we look forward to seeing you at one of the many events and meetings that shape our agenda.

Ian Richards  
President  
UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

## List of abbreviations

CBI	competency-based interview
CCISUA	Coordinating Committee for Staff Unions and Associations of the UN System
CEB	Chief Executives Board
CHF	Swiss franc
CRB	central review bodies
CSS	Central Support Services
DCM	Division of Conference Management (UNOG)
DG	Director General
DGACM	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
ePAS	Electronic Performance Appraisal System
FICSA	Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations
FIPOI	Fondation des immeubles pour les organisations internationales
GS	general service
GSDM	Global Service Delivery Model
HRMS	United Nations Human Resources Management Service
ICSC	International Civil Services Commission
ILO	International Labour Office
JNC	Joint Negotiation Committee
JO	job opening
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OHRM	Office of Human Resources Management
OIOS	United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services
OSLA	Office of Staff Legal Assistance
SAFI	Service d'achats et de commandes des fonctionnaires internationaux
SCC	UNOG Staff Coordinating Council
SECO	Secrétariat d'Etat à l'économie
SG	Secretary-General
SLWP	special leave without pay
SMC	Staff-Management Committee
SOP	standard operating procedure
SSS	Security Service Section
TDY	Temporary Duty Assignment
TJO	temporary job opening
UNAT	United Nations Appeals Tribunal
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDT	United Nations Dispute Tribunal
UNOG	United Nations Office in Geneva
UNSMIS	United Nations Staff Mutual Insurance Society against Sickness and Accident
WG	working group

# Composition of the 36th UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

## **Staff representatives**

Richards	Ian	President
Kelly	Paul	Vice-President
Chaoui	Prisca	Executive Secretary
Kalotay	Kalman	Deputy Executive Secretary
Peck Arif	Catherine	Executive Bureau member
Chantrel	Dominique	Executive Bureau member
Nwabuogu	Gloria	Executive Bureau member
Gaziyev	Jamshid	Executive Bureau member
Baly	Mohamed	Executive Bureau member
Adelise	Dominique (as of 7 June 2018)	
Almario	Francis	
Apostolov	Mario	
Bald	Iain	
Ben Ayed	Slim (until 7 June 2018)	
Duparc	Philippe	
El Garah	Samira	
James	Elizabeth	
Meyer	Olivier	
Popa	Gabriela	
Rouai	Slim	
Ruhana-Mukamusoni	Angelique	
Smith	Bradford	
Stanovic	Marko	
Taporaie	Amos	
Thomaz	Samuel	
Touihri	Mohssen	

## **Polling officers**

Sulstarova	Astrit	President
Bothner	Tor	Vice-President
Aripov	Djurabek	
Cieniewicz	Madeleine	
Darwish	Ahmed	
Fathi	Rafik	
Jauhan	Khanam	
Liang	Guoyong	
Svirchevskyy	Oleksandr	
Zhang	Yenlin	

## **Auditors**

Carandang	Myra	
Clemente	Vivian	
Magnin	Patrick	<b><u>Assistant to the Council</u></b>
Munyan	Jason	Silveira    Froylan

## I. Membership

While all staff are represented by the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council (SCC), as a union it depends on members' contributions. By becoming a dues-paying member, not only are you taking a real stake in your union, but you are also showing strong solidarity to the cause of staff rights.

The SCC aimed at increasing the number of members who contribute financially. To that end it renewed and maintained a series of partnership deals offering discounts to staff at local vendors such as Manor, Apple Store, Tamoil, Zurich insurance, Pharmacie Populaire, Europcar, Mycolorphone, Curves gym, Silhouette gym, among others.

The 36<sup>th</sup> SCC saw an increase of dues-paying members of 9.3 percent compared to the 35<sup>th</sup> SCC (for a total of 418 dues-paying members as of December 2018). Membership dues are paid monthly and are automatically deducted from payroll, for which staff only need to fill out a form provided at the end of this report. This form can also be found on our [website](#). Contribution is only CHF 10 per month for all staff.

The SCC provides a membership card for its dues-paying members. With your card, on top of the reductions offered by our partners, you also receive the following benefits:

- Access to the SCC's legal assistance;
- Free adverts on the SCC's notice boards;
- Participation in the Inter-Agency games is subsidized;
- Three times a year, SAFI organizes a 13 percent discount day - dues-paying members are entitled to the discount one day before;
- Children can attend the SCC's children's party for free;
- Free drinks and meal vouchers during the Staff Gala;
- If you are member of a club, with 15 dues paying members, your club becomes eligible to receive financial support from the SCC.

*If you wish to become a dues-paying member, kindly find the membership form at the end of this Report (Annex 2).*

## II. Summary of work programme implementation

Throughout the whole period under review, activities of the Council were guided by the work programme that was adopted at the beginning of its mandate. You may find below an assessment of the implementation of the SCC's work programme in a tabulated form. The full text of the work programme is reproduced in Annex I. This section summarizes progress with each item. They are elaborated in the rest of this report.

### Protecting pay, jobs and promoting careers:

Objective	Implementation	Observations
Campaign against the deterioration in pay and conditions for all staff, and use all means available. Challenge cuts to our pay at the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) and advocate reform of the ICSC.	Implemented	The campaign included a work stoppage in February and two days of strike in March, the second one with a picket line. The pay cut was challenged by more than 800 staff before the UNDT. As a result of staff action, the ICSC has agreed to review its working methods together with staff federations and the CEB.
Protect jobs in Geneva threatened by budget cuts and offshoring, ensuring retraining and reassignments, as well as voluntary buyouts and external recruitment freezes.	Implemented	The SCC worked with other staff unions and was ultimately successful, in agreeing mitigation measures on GSDM-related offshoring with Management (such as cross-assignments), formally adopted in February 2018. It also succeeded in convincing Management to maintain the external recruitment freeze and find ways to accommodate affected staff.
Review the mobility policy in order to fix its shortcomings.	Implemented	The SCC worked through an SMC working group on a new mobility policy after the previous policy was



		suspended at our request. Proposals for a new policy will be discussed by the SMC.
Simplify staff selection and push for timely advertising of vacant posts.	Implemented	The SCC held a townhall meeting in September to gauge staff views about main changes currently under review by OHRM. Once adopted, changes may have certain positive aspects such as a wider, comprehensive scope, reduced posting periods, simplified eligibility requirements and measures to attain gender parity and geographic balance and enhanced reference verification. We have transmitted staff concerns about the management of job vacancies, cancellation of job openings, freeze period for applying to a job vacancy, limitations pertaining to levels, testing, panel composition, preference for internal candidates, rosters, use of the ePAS, independence of the central review bodies, among others.
Advocate for G staff to be able to apply directly for P posts.	Implemented	A proposal, developed jointly with Management, is currently before the General Assembly for its consideration. It would allow GS staff to be able to apply for P-1, P-2 and P-3 positions based on their experience and qualifications. The General Assembly will make a final decision end 2019.

### Improving the work environment and supporting staff welfare:

Objective	Implementation	Observations
Improve the pension fund's governance and sustainability, while working to increase the value of pensions.	Implemented	Work has continued through the UN participant representatives to the UN Pension Board to address significant problems with the fund's governance. UN staff unions expressed their strong support for OIOS's findings on shortcomings of the Pension Fund to the General Assembly, which passed a resolution accepting most of the findings. On the issue of composition, the Board has been asked to make recommendations to the General Assembly.
Advocate policies to eliminate harassment, including sexual harassment and retaliation, and hold those who commit misconduct accountable for their actions.	Implemented	CCISUA undertook in November 2018 its own staff survey on harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse of authority, with some alarming results such as the frequent role of supervisors in misconduct and fear of filing a complaint. This feedback was used to review the organization's harassment policy. A draft will shortly be considered by the SMC.
Review parental leave and flexible working arrangements in line with best practices.	Implemented	A working group was set up at SMC to look at reforming the current policy on parental leave, formulating proposals for both the UN proper and the ICSC. The discussion at the town hall on selection policy also allowed the SCC to set its position vis-à-vis proposals for unlimited flexible working arrangements, with reasonable limitations suggested.
Push for a review of the travel policy.	Implemented	A townhall was held to gather information on the main concerns of staff, mainly on standard of accommodation, travel time, reasonable expenses, etc. All views collected have been transmitted to Management, for its consideration.
Request a review of the medical insurance credits to reflect today's higher prices.	Partly implemented	We have worked with our representatives on the UNSMIS committee to review credits. This discussion is ongoing.
Push for the Palais renovations (SHP) to serve the needs of staff and the organization.	Implemented	The SCC continued its lobbying for more favourable workspace conditions for staff during and after the renovation of the Palais and completion of the H building. It has tried out personally the pilot hot-desking environment in the Dépendance La Pelouse, and has



		developed a series of observations and suggestions. It has lobbied successfully against CHF 67 million in additional funds to introduce ventilation in the older buildings of the Palais to allow for the introduction of hot-desking there, too. While the SCC understands that SHP is bound by General Assembly resolutions, it regrets that, despite best efforts, the concerns of staff were for the most part ignored. Nevertheless, the SCC remained engaged with UNOG leadership and the SHP team in order to make the current project as good as possible. The joint working group on SHP established back in 2017 met regularly in order to discuss different issues pertaining to the project and that are of concerns for the staff.
Invest SCC funds in assets that benefit staff and diversify SCC income.	Partly implemented	Work has been done on exploring options for investment; however, due to a major reduction of budget income from SAFI, decision on investing was suspended pending new financial forecasts.
Support staff recreational facilities.	Implemented	The SCC supported to transformation of the UN Beach into UN Port under a more efficient management. It undertook the necessary measures to transfer the assets through a professional inventory. It also provided support to clubs and staff representing Geneva at the Inter-agency games.

#### **Keeping staff informed and involved:**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Observations</b>
Hold regular townhalls and inform staff regularly through broadcasts.	Implemented	The SCC held frequent town halls and sent out 99 broadcasts on a variety of subjects.
Survey staff on key issues and developments.	Implemented	Staff was surveyed, with CCISUA, on GS salaries and on harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse of authority.

### **III. Defending staff interests**

As the representative union of UN staff in Geneva, the SCC has a right to be consulted on all issues affecting the careers, welfare and working conditions of staff in any Secretariat department. Based on this principle, the SCC assumed a proactive role in defending staff and engage Management where there had been staff rights violations and/or lack of consultation.

Meetings with Management in Geneva took place through formal channels, such as the Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC), and meetings with the Director-General, UNOG's Director of Administration, the Chief of Human Resources, and the various department heads and executive officers in Geneva.

With Management in New York, the SCC communicated through ad hoc meetings and video conferences, with the Secretary-General, the SG's Chef de Cabinet and Deputy Chef de Cabinet and the Under Secretary-General for Management, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and their staff plus the Assistant Secretaries-General at the Pension Fund.

The SCC has also informally engaged with Member States in Geneva and at Headquarters in order to promote and defend staff interests.

#### **1. Fighting the pay cut**

It is to be recalled that in March 2017 the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) announced a 7.7 percent pay cut for P and D staff in Geneva on the back of post-adjustment calculations that turned out to be flawed from a statistical point of view. Together with other

Geneva-based unions of international organizations, the 35<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating SCC was quick to react, and organized a “no pay cut” campaign. As highlighted in the report of last year, at its summer 2017 session in Vienna, the ICSC seemed to reconsider the issue, delay the application of the cut for existing staff until February 2018, and limit the final cut to about 2 percent. However, by the time the 36<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating SCC was elected, it became clear that the ICSC did not respect that engagement and raised the total cut back to 5.2 percent, to be implemented in two steps between February and June 2018.

The first emergency action of the 36<sup>th</sup> SCC elected in February 2018 was to launch an extraordinary consultative procedure for a proposal to strike against the pay cut, as per article 16 of the Regulations on Representation of the Staff of the United Nations Office at Geneva, parallel with a work stoppage on 26 February 2018. In line with the rules, the consultation was held on 15 March 2018, inviting all staff to reply to the following question:

*“Do you agree to resort to a strike of one or more days against the ongoing deterioration in your pay and conditions of service, if all means of reaching agreement with our employer and ICSC fail?”*

[The detailed explanations of the SCC](#) convinced masses of staff. On 15 March 2018, 1040 people (89.4%) voted yes and 120 people (10.6%) voted no to the strike (three people cast invalid or blank votes). With the requirement of a simple majority, the legal basis to call a strike was met. The first day of strike took place the next day (on 16 March 2018). Despite some veiled threats and intimidatory messages to staff, the strike was followed by many people. This strike, the first one in Geneva in 41 years, received significant coverage in the international press and in the international trade union movement.

The first day of strike also allowed momentum to gather in other organizations and duty stations, allowing a coordinated action for the second day of strike on 23 March 2018. Our action of that day coincided with action at the ILO and at various duty stations around the globe. While the main form of action of the first day was absence from office, the second day included picket lines from 8 to 10 a.m. at Pregny, Chemin de fer and Nations gates, a meeting at the Celestial Globe at 10 a.m., and another meeting in Room 18 at 2 p.m. It showed the capacity of staff for organizing themselves and made their voice heard.

While the two days of strike did not convince ICSC to rescind its decisions or the Secretary General not to apply the pay cut of 5.2 per cent, it allowed UNOG staff to express their discontent about the situation and mobilize themselves for the next step in the challenge to the pay cut, this time through a legal way. It is also important to recall the results of our strike that, at its April 2018 meeting, partly under that pressure, and partly based on the conclusions of their consultant which echoed our concerns, the ICSC agreed to conduct a deep and wide-ranging review on post adjustment together with Management and staff federations representatives. This means that the scope for future arbitrary pay cuts may be diminished largely. Our strike also contributed to our employing organizations to understand the importance of reforming the way in which our conditions of service are set by the ICSC.

## **2. Legal challenge to the pay cut**

Already in 2017, 330 staff from Geneva appealed at the United Nations Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) against the first version of the pay cut (7.7 per cent). However, as the pay cut was postponed from August 2017 to February and June 2018 with a revised formula (bringing it down to 5.2 per cent), a new appeal had to be submitted by all of them. At the same time, the requirement for reapplication also provided an opportunity for more colleagues to join the appeal. Indeed, by the established deadlines, the number of applicants increased to over 800 (813 by June 2018), mostly due to a successful campaign by the SCC. People were mobilized by raising awareness about their rights thanks to the two days of strike, and due to open questions about who can benefit if the appeal is successful.

The appeal of Geneva staff against the pay cut was organized with the help of the Office of Staff Legal Assistance, which agreed to represent the 813 staff. The UNDT held its first hearing on the case on 22 October 2018 in New York. The event was retransmitted live and followed by many staff despite the time lag. The Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA) representative of staff raised many detailed questions about the legality of the pay cut action and the procedures followed by the ICSC. More hearings and a judgment are expected to take place later in 2019. It is to be recalled that in order to maximize the chances of success of the legal

challenge, the SCC recruited an external lawyer of great renown who is also working on the case.

### **3. ICSC Reform**

In June 2018, the second part of the pay cut was implemented bringing the total cut since February to 5.2 percent. It was regrettable that those cuts were done based on erroneous calculations as shown in this analysis by the Geneva-based organizations.

The initial pay cut was 7.7 percent. However, staff actions, which included general staff meetings, demonstrations, work stoppages and two strikes, led to a reduction in the pay cut to 5.2 percent. They also led our employing organizations to understand the importance of reforming the way in which our conditions of service are set by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). As a result, the ICSC has agreed to review its working methods together with staff federations and the Chief Executives Board (CEB). We will monitor this process closely knowing that our final goal is a system that allows tripartite participation.

### **4. UN Appeals Tribunal overturns staff rights**

The UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) ruled in July 2018 that the Secretary-General had been correct in deciding to cut the pay of staff with children and working spouses by up to 4 percent. In doing so, it rejected an earlier judgement of the lower UNDT (UNDT/2017/098) and decided that General Assembly resolutions, however radical, trumped the labour rights of staff.

While this related to the 2016 compensation review of the ICSC rather than the Geneva pay cut, the judgement is nevertheless sobering and calls into question the impartiality of the UNAT, which is composed of [part-time judges](#) paid according to the number of judgements they process, and almost always finds against staff.

The shortcomings of the UNAT show once again the urgency of reforming the system that sets our conditions of service; a system that gives staff unions and federations little say; a system that also led to the 5.2 percent pay cut in Geneva on the basis of [incorrect calculations](#) made by the ICSC and larger pay cuts elsewhere.

### **5. Global Service Delivery Model**

GSDM is a proposal inherited from the previous Secretary-General. It would see administrative services centralized and offshored to two to three different locations.

The SCC worked with other staff unions and was ultimately successful, in agreeing on mitigation measures with Management which were formally adopted in February 2018. These include the following:

- Expedite the adoption of the downsizing policy
- Freeze external recruitment for General service staff in administrative functions
- Strengthen workforce planning to identify positions, which will become vacant in affected offices or within the UN Secretariat against which affected staff could be laterally reassigned
- Offer possibilities of temporary assignment (TDY) for affected staff (both General Service and Professional), where appropriate, up to 6 months in accordance with the UN staff regulations and rules;
- Allow for on-the-job training and coaching, and allocate time for staff to learn and become proficient with new functions, as necessary.
- Ensure that capacity is provided for the provision of counselling services (stress, career and placement) to support staff during the transition;
- Offer an early separation package to affected staff with an enhanced termination indemnity in accordance with the UN staff regulations and rules.
- Allow for placement on special leave without pay (SLWOP) of negatively affected staff (in lieu of immediate separation/termination) for a period of up to two years to provide them

with additional time for a potential lateral reassignment or selection against a vacant position;

Moreover, the General Assembly was asked last June by the Secretary-General to consider a number of proposed locations to which to relocate certain administrative functions, also known as Global Service delivery model. These included Budapest, Nairobi and Mexico City.

The SCC representatives lobbied a number of delegations during their missions to New York and expressed their concerns about the GSDM, including the lack of French-speaking duty stations in the selection. A letter to that effect was sent to the Secretary-General of the Organisation internationale de la francophonie.

Subsequently the General Assembly rejected the Secretary-General's proposal. It then gave him until March 2019 to come back with a new proposal. In preparing his new proposal the Secretary-General has asked countries to make offers to host service centres, similarly to how Amazon carried out its search for a second headquarters. Those offers were submitted in early November and are currently being analysed in New York.

In the meantime, the delay by the General Assembly has provided vital breathing space for managers to find new positions for potentially affected staff. A meeting was held with the Head of HRMS at UNOG in order to discuss the best way to limit the impact on staff. The SCC has suggested the establishment of a joint working group to secure that the Staff rules and regulations are respected for staff for whom no placement option will be made available.

## **6. Pension Fund**

Work has continued through the UN participant representatives to the UN Pension Board to address significant problems with the fund's governance. In 2018, OIOS was requested by the General Assembly to review the governance of the fund. The OIOS audit agreed with a number of concerns that the SCC and other UN staff unions had expressed, namely, that the Board composition needs to be recomposed to reflect that two-thirds of participants in the fund are UN staff yet they only hold one-third of the seats. Other issues included serious conflicts of interest between Board members, the fund secretariat and the FAFICS retiree federation. Taken together these issues had contributed to increasing costs, an ineffective Board and the late payment of pensions to retirees.

UN staff unions expressed their strong support for OIOS's findings to the General Assembly, which passed a resolution broadly accepting those same findings. However, on certain issues, such as composition, the Board has been asked to make recommendations to the General Assembly. There is therefore a lot of work to do to shape these recommendations and the final outcome will come in January 2020.

## **7. Gender strategy**

Management proposed changes to the staff regulations that would affect the downsizing policy already agreed between staff and Management. Currently that policy establishes a point system for deciding which staff are retained, in line with the staff regulations, based on contract type, length of service, competence and integrity. Where points are equal, gender is used as a tie-breaker.

Management proposed to change the policy to put gender as the primary consideration for retention, ahead of contract type, length of service, competence and integrity.

Given the implications for long-serving staff in the field, staff unions made a number of counter proposals that were refused by Management. The matter will now be decided by the General Assembly.

## **8. Mobility**

The SCC worked through a Staff Management Committee (SMC) working group on a new mobility policy after the previous policy was suspended at our request. The new policy was based on surveys, focus groups and feedback from staff and managers. It provided for staff to undertake voluntary moves and swaps. However, the Secretary-General did not accept to send the proposal to the General Assembly for approval and has asked SMC to reconsider the matter.

## **9. Improving parental leave**

A working group was set up at SMC to look at reforming the current policy on parental leave, including maternity, paternity and adoption leave. The group has been examining practices in different organizations including outside the UN system to look at practice such as sharing leave between parents to allow mothers to return sooner to work should they wish. Proposals are being classified according to whether they can be addressed within the UN or need to go to the ICSC.

## **10. Review of General Service salaries**

As part of its programme of work, the ICSC is reviewing the methodology for determining GS salaries. For memory these are supposed to be set according to the Flemming principle, in other words compensation should be in line with the best locally prevailing conditions, in order to be competitive in the local labour market.

The SCC took part in a survey by our federation, the Coordinating Committee for Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System CCISUA, in order to identify elements of the current methodology that need improving. This includes reducing the number of comparator employers and increasing flexibility in how comparators are determined in order to better reflect the local economic structure, which in Geneva is more geared towards banks and multinationals. We have also questioned the need to include the local public sector as we are not aware of this being a significant provider of workforce to the UN.

The review process started at the ICSC session in Summer 2018 and will likely last two years.

## **11. Staff selection**

Since the selection system is currently being under review by OHRM, the SCC held a townhall meeting in September to gauge staff views about the main changes that are being proposed.

Highlights of these changes as communicated by Management include the following:

- A wider, comprehensive scope: all categories are included.
- Reduced posting periods: 30 days for Field positions, or for project-funded positions, possibility of reduction from 30 to 15 days.
- Simplified eligibility requirements/easy comparison table: education and work experience outlined in annex to the document; no more limitations pertaining to level. Specific limitations may apply as outlined in section 5 (including those mandated by the General Assembly i.e. G to P exam).
- With respect to United Nations Volunteers, the freeze period on their eligibility to apply/be selected for job openings has been removed.
- With respect to National Professional Officers: more visibility and clearer comparison to International Professionals have been added in the annex to the AI.
- The assessment of candidates has been simplified: options for different types of assessments and use of assessment services approved by OHRM have been introduced.

Measures to attain gender parity:

- Assessment panel to be gender-balanced.
- List of recommended candidates to reflect gender balance.
- Gender parity target in senior, policy-making and field positions is a consideration for selection.
- Candidature of spouses in duty stations of staff members' assignments to be given due consideration.

Measures to attain geographic balance: for geographic posts, at least one candidate from unrepresented or underrepresented countries to be recommended;

Enhanced reference verification to include (in addition to prior employment and academic degrees) absence of records on SEA, serious misconduct, harassment in all its forms, human right violations.

As a result of the townhall held with staff, many conclusions were reached and suggestions made. They will be shared with Management in due time:

Management of job vacancies: Many vacant positions remain unfilled for a long period of time without any objective justification. There is a need to regulate this issue by imposing a 6-month-deadline for the opening of a vacancy once a position becomes vacant.

Cancellation of job openings (JOs): Any decision for the cancellation of a job opening (JO) has to be based on objective criteria and not left to the judgment of the Hiring manager. Justifications such as "significant change to the functions of the advertised position or change to the organizational structure affecting the functions of the advertised position" may sometimes be misused, putting at risk the impartiality of the outcome of the selection process.

Freeze period for applying to a Job vacancy: Since the freeze period has been removed for United Nations Volunteers, the same should be done for interns, consultants, individual contractors and gratis personnel who render service to the Organization and who run sometimes the risk to lose a job opportunity due to the freeze period of 6 months.

Limitations pertaining to level: Allowing staff to apply to any position irrespective of their grade could lead to many situations of dissatisfaction and frustration among staff. It is obvious that going through the different grades allow staff to acquire the necessary experience to perform the duties pertaining to the position for which they are applying.

Testing: There is not currently any standardized approach to the tests conducted. Some JOs do not even require any test. It is suggested to have tests conducted for all Job openings in order to test knowledge of the subject matter that cannot be tested through the competency-based interview (CBI) and to regulate the testing process (in term of content, length, passing grades, etc.).

Panel composition: In order to guarantee the impartiality and independence of the selection process, OHRM should nominate the members of the panel while ensuring that at least one member is from another Department and preferably and when it is possible from another duty station.

Internal candidates: The fact of having all job vacancies opened externally and internally is transforming the selection process into a lengthy process that is requiring a lot of resources from OHRM and the Hiring managers: Selecting external candidates at the expenses of internal ones is source of demotivation. That is why, it is suggested to favor internal candidates when the requirements are equally met.

Ranking of rostered candidates: Based on the test and the CBI results, rostered candidates should be ranked and this ranking should be used by the HM when making the final decision, in order to guarantee the total objectivity of the final decision.

Use of roster: The use of the roster is currently left to the discretion of the Hiring manager who may decide to select a candidate from the roster or run a new selection process ignoring the roster. This creates a lot of false expectations among candidates and makes the placement on a roster a meaningless exercise where subjectivity prevails. A possible solution would be to make the use of a roster mandatory for a period of three years, after which new selection processes have to be conducted.

Releasing and receiving offices: A disagreement between the releasing and the receiving offices should not lead to the rescindment of the offer. Both offices should work together in order to reach in agreement, failure to do that will lead to appeals and to a waste of time and resources.

Reference verification: While the reference verification is important before the confirmation of the offer employment, the issue of the protection of privacy remains important and it is important to clarify which rules of privacy apply to the database that are going to be used.

Use of the ePas document: The current selection system doesn't foresee the use of the ePas document and the CBI is the only tool used by the hiring manager to make the selection decision. While it is understood that the ePas is discarded in the selection process to ensure equality of treatment between external and internal candidates, it is suggested to take it into account in the

selection process by establishing, for example, a point system for the ratings of both the CBI and the ePas. This point system will apply when the selection decision is to be made between internal candidates.

***Role of the Central Review Bodies (CRBs):*** The CRBs have currently very limited or inexistent role in the selection process. The decisions they take aren't binding as the final decision is taken by OHRM. Moreover, they have limited access to some basic information that allow them to make considerate decisions (the tests, the grading, the audio recording if needed of the interviews, etc.) and their secretariat is made of representatives of OHRM, which doesn't always guarantee the independence and impartiality of their decisions. It is suggested to strengthen the role of the CRBs by making their decisions binding to OHRM and by ensuring their full independence.

## **12. Travel policy**

Five years have passed since the new UN [travel policy](#) has been in place. In line with the SCC's work programme, the SCC organized a townhall to gather staff views regarding the review of the policy mainly when it comes to standard of accommodation, travel time, reasonable expenses, etc. All views collected will be transmitted to Management.

## **13. Temporary appointments**

The SCC has been concerned at the proliferation of temporary appointments in Geneva, even when more stable contracts are possible with the funding available, and the unequal leave and other conditions.

During the last meeting of the Staff Management Committee held in New York from 18 to 25 June, the SCC submitted a paper in relation to this issue, but no agreement was reached and Management committed to look closely into this issue and to revert back.

Meanwhile, the SCC has been working with OHCHR human resources in Geneva to get a better understanding of how temporary appointments are being used and what could permit better types of contract to be provided when funding permits.

Two important causes of this situation (although there are others) have been identified:

- The short-term and fragmented nature of funding for certain mandates making it more difficult to create fixed-term positions, for which a reasonable expectation of funding of at least 12 months is required.
- The prevalence of vacancy cascades whereby temporary staff are hired to replace staff who take up temporary job openings. Some of these cascades cover multiple levels – the further down the cascade the shorter the contract length.

Following meetings with the Chief of human resources, the SCC held a staff meeting in October. The meeting covered:

- Consistent approaches to help staff who because of their nationalities would otherwise be required to leave Geneva during a contract break.
- Encouraging outside applicants from developing countries to apply for initial TJOs, thereby reducing vacancy cascades.
- Reviewing funding streams to create more fixed-term positions.
- Creation of rosters at P-3 to P-5 levels to assist the selection process, and prioritization of those staff that have spent the longest on temporary appointments.

With regard to the first point, the SCC met representatives of HRMS and a consistent approach was suggested to staff who have personal compelling reasons justifying their stay in Switzerland during the contract break. For the last point, the SCC is pleased that OHCHR Management has now published the rosters and staff are encouraged to apply.

The SCC will remain seized of this matter at the Departmental as well as the global level.



## **14. Administration of justice**

The SCC has continued to advocate for more independent, impartial, effective and efficient system of administration of justice in the UN.

Our staff deserve access to justice, especially given lack of national redress mechanism for labour disputes. In 2018, we have continued advocating for regularising three ad-litem judges of the UNDT and for more resources for the Office of Staff Legal Assistance. The SCC has reiterated its request to the General Assembly for more clarity on the Organization's follow up with regard to managers who are referred by the tribunals for accountability measures. The rule of law requires prompt and appropriate action by the Organization on accountability referrals, and any such action, or lack thereof, should be reported back to the Tribunals with explanation if no action has been taken.

The SCC's advocacy has also prioritised improvements in the protection of staff from retaliation and prohibited conduct, including of those who have engaged or testified at the UNDT and UNAT. Our position has been that staff litigation for justice before the Tribunals should be considered as a protected activity, so staff litigants and all witnesses should be accorded protection by the Ethics Office and the Tribunals should have the authority to make orders for their protection.

Based on our concerns and targeted work, the General Assembly has granted some of our requests at its last autumn session of 2018. In resolution 73/276, Member States approved proposals to provide all personnel including consultants and interns access to remedies against prohibited conduct; requested a report on how the Organization addresses retaliation against staff who testify at the tribunal; and asked for the SG to report back on the accountability of managers whose decisions were grossly negligent and have led to litigation and financial loss. Rather than approving three full-time judges at the UNDT in lieu of three ad-litem judges as the SCC, the SG and the Internal Justice SCC has recommended, the General Assembly chose to establish four half-time judges, to be deployed as required by caseload of the Tribunal.

Even if we are pleased with some good progress, there is still more work to be done to ensure that staff are not afraid to seek justice, and when they do, justice is served in an impartial and efficient manner. The SCC will continue empowering staff to redress their concerns at the two tribunals and consult staff on challenges they may face in the internal judicial process in order to address systemic shortcomings in the administration of justice.

## **15. Fighting all forms of misconduct**

The Coordinating Committee for Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA), of which the SCC is a member, undertook in November 2018 a staff survey on harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse of authority (this survey was distinct from the management survey on sexual harassment only).

Over 6600 of staff from across the UN System took the survey. The survey responses pointed to a number of alarming patterns:

- Misconduct is most frequently perpetrated by supervisors (46% in cases of sexual harassment, and over 70% in cases of discrimination, harassment or abuse of authority).
- Less than one fifth of victims of misconduct chose to file a complaint; the two predominant reasons cited by staff were their lack of trust in the system and fear of retaliation.
- Amongst staff who did file a complaint, 20% believe they were retaliated against for having done so.
- Nearly half of investigations took more than one year to complete; staff felt the investigations were conducted in a professional manner in only one third of cases, and were fully satisfied with the outcome in only 10% of cases.

These troubling results point to a veritable crisis in the UN System's management of misconduct in the workplace. The responses to the survey suggest that staff do not feel treated with respect and dignity, and reveal a serious lack of trust in the system.

The feedback we got from staff will be used to better inform the SCC discussions with Management on proposed changes to the relevant legislation, in order to better protect the staff.

At the same time, the SCC worked through the SMC to review the current policy on prohibition of harassment, discrimination and prohibited conduct. The work is ongoing with a lot of attention being paid to the complaints and investigation procedure and ensuring coverage for all categories of personnel.

## **16. Strategic Heritage Plan**

The new building H is slowly coming together. The General Assembly has decreed that all staff in the new building, to be completed in 2020, be subject to hot-desking (variously referred to by the Administration as flexible workspace or smart working) in which there will be 4 desks for every 5 staff. Affected staff include OHCHR, OCHA and the Division of Administration, but, based on concerns received, not UNCTAD, ECE nor the Language Service.

However, the SCC came to learn that in the [Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly](#) in its last session, the UN Administration through the SG's report requested CHF 67 million in additional funds to introduce ventilation in the older buildings of the Palais to allow for the introduction of hot-desking. This request was not consulted with the SCC and the General Assembly rejected such a request, which means that hot-desking won't be introduced in the older buildings.

In preparation for this change in the workspace, a change that has not proven popular in New York and on which the Administration admitted at the last meeting of the SMC they were unable to measure a resulting increase in productivity, the SCC was invited to try out the pilot hot-desking environment in the Dépendance La Pelouse. Having tried this hot-desking, our conclusions are not encouraging. The main points are as following:

- Hot-desking can be a challenge for activities requiring confidentiality. It may be difficult, if not many times impossible, to foresee confidential activities and book a conference room in advance each time. Unexpected confidential phone calls will not be possible without urging the caller to wait while confidential space is found or having to ask to reschedule the call.
- It is no wonder that colleagues who arrive first in the morning prefer to take places to the back where no one will walk behind them – as to retain a natural level of privacy. Those that arrive later are only left with a choice of desk with the hallway behind them where people walk and have less privacy. Staff are therefore obliged to “compete” for more privileged / less annoying seats.
- The fact that there are no fixed places makes it difficult to find a particular colleague, therefore losing time when needing to interact directly. This may be particularly troubling for colleagues who interact daily with different colleagues/clients.
- In general, the noise level is significantly higher than in individual offices as one can hear everything taking place in the open space.
- As for spontaneous discussions with colleagues, our experience is that in theory they should be moved to other spaces but in practice they take place in the hot-desking environment, disturbing others. This is particularly true to cases when work on the screen in front of somebody has to be debated.
- Speaking on the fixed phone is often annoying for colleagues sitting nearby and who will unwantedly hear the other person's conversation, however short one tries to be and however low voice is used. Negative implications for concentration will be inevitable, as well as reticence to discuss issues in detail in order to respect colleagues nearby.
- For storage space, lockers of any size may not be sufficient to hold all the professional and personal equipment typically found on a desk.

It is worth noting that the SCC was officially invited to certain SHP planning meetings as of April 2015. The SCC conducted a [survey](#) in June 2015 in which many of you expressed your strong concerns with regards to hot-desking and open-plan offices. These were reinforced by a [scientific study](#) undertaken by Swiss company, Ergorama, and a petition signed by over 1,000 of you against open space and hot-desking. The SCC itself voted on October 2017 a [resolution](#) of no-confidence in the project as it then was.

The SCC understands that SHP is bound by General Assembly resolutions we also understand that the GA's resolutions were also based on the proposals submitted by our Management. We therefore regret that despite best efforts the concerns of staff were for the most part ignored, including many concerns expressed during the focus group meetings organized by the SHP team.

Nevertheless, the SCC remained engaged with UNOG leadership and the SHP team in order to make the current project as good as possible. In this context, the joint working group on SHP established back in 2017 met regularly in order to discuss different issues pertaining to the project and that are of concerns for the staff.

On the global level, the SCC pushed for the composition of a working group with Management. Its main mandate is to adopt guiding principles that apply to all renovations projects. The working group has finalized its work and issued a report whereby the principle of consultation is fully embedded.

## **17. Security and Safety Service**

The SCC has succeeded in establishing good working relationships with the leadership of the SSS, which enabled it to address individual as well as systemic problems in a proper manner.

The SCC was consulted and involved in the drafting of the SOPs for a rotation policy to be implemented in the Service as of 1 April 2019. It convened one meeting with security staff in order to gather their opinion about the proposed policy. All the opinions shared during that meeting or by email were then discussed with Management and an agreement was reached concerning the start date of the implementation policy and the need to cover G3, G4 and G5 levels and not only the G4 and the G5 levels. One of the concerns for which no agreement was reached relates to the rotation policy being implemented on both Operational and Support Units, as the initial proposal covers only the Operational units. In order to tackle this issue, a joint working group was put in place. The working group is tasked with the duty to establish the principles upon which rotation from/to the support units would be based.

On another note, a number of SSS staff raised concerns about the instructions given by their hierarchy whereby body tattoos need to be covered in summer time. A joint working group was established in order to come up with recommendations concerning this issue. The working group determined the types of tattoos that need to be covered, i.e. tattoos which are contradictory to the UN values and principles. As for other types of tattoos, they don't need to be covered.

Moreover, through its representative in the Joint Committee for Health and Safety at the Workplace, the SCC succeeded in convincing Management to conduct tests at the entrances of the Palais to assess the level of risks to which security staff are exposed as a result of the inhalation of toxic gases during the car boots checking. These tests were conducted by an expert from SECO on two different dates and the results showed that there are no serious health risks involved.

## **18. G1 to G4 Group**

The G1–G4 group was established by the SCC and endorsed by Management in 2014. Its mandate is to review cases of selection for the G1–G4 categories, and provide comments if necessary. Its work is analogous with that of joint bodies (Central Review Panel, Central Review Committee and Central Review Board), which review cases of selection for staff of the G5 category and above. The group, which is currently composed of six elected members of the SCC, has been very active in reviewing various cases that have been submitted to it, making comments and requesting clarifications when needed, and thus contributing to fairer selection processes for the G1–G4 categories. In two instances, it has expressed its dissenting views which were transmitted to the DG. Regrettably, these dissenting views weren't taken into account, which made the Group raise its concern with Management about its *raison d'être*.

## **19. Abolishment of posts in the Reference Unit (DCM)**

Following the decision of DGACM, the UNOG DCM Reference Unit will cease to exist as of 1 January 2020. 15 staff members are impacted DCM Management carried out efforts to place most of the staff members affected, successfully placed 12 staff and 3 for whom still a definitive solution has not been found. The SCC organized a meeting with the affected staff and OSLA to inform them of their rights and obligations, and has been actively engaging with DCM Management to find concrete solutions for those affected.

## **20. Update on the crèche project**

As you may be aware, the SCC has since 2012 been seeking to establish a crèche at the UN. To this end, the SCC:

- surveyed and held townhalls with parents;
- commissioned a feasibility study to establish an appropriate business model with set a construction cost of CHF 2.2 million and calculated that for a crèche to be sustainable at an 80 percent occupation rate, while meeting Swiss rules on staff-to-child ratios, it would need to charge parents a fee of CHF 2,900 per month per child;
- examined various plots of land that were proposed by UNOG administration;
- studied possible legal frameworks for the crèche that would be compatible with UN rules;
- established a reserve fund for the construction of a crèche, now valued at CHF 1.6 million;
- held discussions with local authorities, the Swiss mission and FIPOI;
- spoken with the staff unions of other international organizations to identify partnership opportunities;
- met with private crèche providers
- examined the possibility of acquiring an existing crèche in the neighbourhood.

It also noted that an unsubsidized private crèche in the neighbourhood charged CHF 2,800 per month, while municipally-financed crèches charged even less and offered discounts for siblings.

Concerned that parents may move their children from the UN crèche to cheaper crèches outside, thereby bringing the occupation rate below the sustainability level of 80 percent, the SCC explored avenues to reduce costs. It proposed to the International Civil Service Commission and General Assembly the introduction of subsidies for pre-school care, which was refused. At the same time, it concluded that undertaking the kind of cost-cutting that allowed other unsubsidized private crèches to charge less would create a reputational risk for the UN.

Since then a number of recent developments have made the establishment and sustainability of an unsubsidized crèche on UN grounds more difficult:

- For the crèche to work it would need to be able to accept children from outside the UN system, requiring external access and additional security perimeter measures, increasing costs, according to the estimates received, by up to CHF 600,000.
- Under the evolving security situation and in light of incidents elsewhere, a UN crèche would be seen as a soft target, requiring a more robust and expensive construction, adding up to CHF 800,000.
- Local authorities have been making a concerted effort to create further subsidized public crèche places, leading to their reduced support for a UN crèche and further threatening its long-term financial viability.
- The Swiss authorities decided that some additional reserves set aside for the crèche were taxable, thereby reducing the funds available.
- The General Assembly requested the UN to explore making some of its most accessible and easily constructible land available to entities able to pay a rent, in order to mitigate the construction costs of the Palais renovations (SHP). This would be beyond the financial means of the crèche.

- New Swiss zoning rules limited construction possibilities on some other parts of UN land or required the organization of costly architectural competitions.
- Considering the financial viability and in light of recent developments, the SCC took the difficult decision to discontinue the crèche project.

## **21. Support to staff**

The Council provided assistance to all staff who approached it, to the extent of its capacity, in areas such as harassment, abuse of authority and performance management. The Council represented staff before Management when necessary. It resorted in a great number of cases to the assistance of the office of the Ombudsman for informal resolutions, which proved to be a useful way out. In extreme cases, it directed staff to the OSLA with which it enjoyed a very good working relationship.

# **IV. Supporting staff welfare activities**

## **1. Clubs and societies**

The Council provided support to UNOG clubs and societies that were able to demonstrate, in accordance with the Council guidelines, that their activities would benefit staff at large. Logistical support was also provided for different clubs for booking spaces and sending broadcasts. Moreover, the Council has continued to provide drinking water in the sports room located on the 8th floor.

Despite the fact that in 2017 the SHP team met with the various UN clubs and gathered their input, and gave a green light to the establishment of a proper club and fitness area in the building in the context of the renovations, it is no more certain a fitness will be made available. The SCC is actively working with the SHP team through the CSS in order to ensure that enough space will be made available for Clubs once the renovations are completed.

## **2. UN Special**

UN Special magazine is a staff magazine owned by both UNOG Staff Coordinating Council and WHO Staff Association. The Editorial Board of the magazine made tremendous efforts to encourage UNOG staff to contribute to the magazine. As a result, the magazine saw an increase in the numbers of articles written by staff and of interest for staff. Moreover, the Inter-Agency committee decided in August 2018 to recruit, as of September, a professional journalist in order to act as an advisor for the Editor-in-Chief, with the aim of further improving the quality and the format of the magazine.

## **3. Improvements at the UN beach**

The Council and Management worked closely together in order to manage the UN Port association (formerly UN Beach Club) during the summer season of 2017, following changes to the statutes. Many improvements were already made in 2017. Additional ones were introduced in 2018. They included the following:

Some of the improvements this year include:

- The children's paddling pool has been replaced by a new and more salubrious installation that includes pump and filter. This means the water will stay clean and won't have to be replaced, at great cost, every two days. The pool was donated by the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council at a cost of CHF 60'000.
- The wall has been fixed, although a more fundamental repair will be needed when the lake levels are lowered in Spring 2020.
- Subject to authorization, a pontoon of 200 square metres providing six new boat spaces, sunbathing space, storage for paddle boards (so they don't have to be dragged up the stairs), easy access to the water (instead of slippery stairs) and a slide that goes straight into the lake, will shortly be installed.

- Parking places are being marked out to ensure a more efficient use of the car park. A parking place for visitors or members with disabilities has been reserved.
- The grass, which has suffered from several hot summers and is almost non-existent, is being replanted with a more hardy variety, ready to be used by mid-May.
- More evening events and courses (yoga, paddle-board yoga, sailing etc.).

Please visit [unport.org](http://unport.org) for more information, including the restaurant menu and information about bookings and parties.

The feedback received from staff was overwhelmingly positive.

#### ***4. Long service medal awards ceremony***

The SCC organized a long service medal award ceremony on 13 February. It recognized staff who have completed the extraordinary achievement of having 25 years (silver medal), 30 years (golden medal), and 35 years (platinum medal) of service to the Organization. Over 80 staff members were awarded medals for their long service, presented by UNOG Director-General, Mr. Michael Møller.

#### ***5. Children's Spring party***

The Children party took place on Wednesday 16 May. Over 200 children participated. This year a new format was introduced where a Sonia Grimm show delighted the children with colourful music and dancing. Children enjoyed a snack generously offered by Eldora. The party ended with parting gifts for the children and personal photo shoots with Sonia Grimm.

#### ***6. Staff garden party***

The 2018 annual staff garden party took place on 29 June. Its aim was to celebrate the staff, consultants, contractors and interns who make the UN what it is today. Compared to previous years, it was held in two parts: a lunch time gathering in the park featuring a giant picnic, a band, food stands and a drinks tent; and an evening party at the UN beach with a mix of bands and DJs, food and drink stands. As this was all about celebrating the wider UN family, everyone was welcome to bring their families and any former colleagues.

#### ***7. Staff party***

The staff party was held on 7 December. Once again it featured the world karaoke stage, which proved to be hugely popular, Tony Momrelle's R&B and jazz band, and the electrifying mixtures of DJ Saiko.

Staff, consultants, interns, partners and friends enjoyed themselves until three in the morning.

#### ***8. Concerts***

The Council supported the organization of a number concerts which featured both staff and external musicians. The Council also co-organized a Christmas concert with the support of the United Nations Christian Association. These concerts were much appreciated by staff.

#### ***9. Inter-Agency Games 2018***

The 2018 Inter-Agency Games were held in Montecatini Terme, Italy in May. As is tradition, the Council encouraged participation of all staff and it is expected to subsidize the participation of its dues-paying members once the request is received from the staff Sports Commission (level of subsidy to be determined).

#### ***10. Crèche places in Geneva***

The Council was able to secure places for children of staff members in different crèches located in the Geneva and the Vaud cantons. The Council specified in the messages that were

communicated to staff that it doesn't intervene in the relation that may be established between the crèche and the staff members. The feedback received so far was positive.

## V. Communication with staff

The SCC is accountable to you for its actions, and in turn is made all the stronger by the active support and feedback it receives. We have kept you informed of all our positions and of matters affecting or likely to affect you. We have listened and understood your concerns and most definitely benefited from your feedback. We have made extensive use of the communication tools available to us.

### 1. *Email broadcasts*

As of the date of this report, the 36<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating SCC had sent out 99 email broadcasts. Our broadcasts have informed you of developments, invited your feedback and sought your support in our campaigns. We are pleased that you appreciate being informed and engaged on such a regular basis, and the SCC will continue improving its communications.

### 2. *[www.staffcoordinatingcouncil.org](http://www.staffcoordinatingcouncil.org)*

The SCC's website contains all the news updates on the activities of the SCC, important documents, contacts, information on meetings, the services the SCC provides and on the clubs and societies, and upcoming events.

We have also continually updated our Facebook page, created in conjunction with the other unions to distribute the information to a wide audience as possible.  
<http://www.facebook.com/unstaffunions>.

### 3. *Media coverage*

Over the year, the SCC's activities generated significant media coverage.

- Agence France Presse (and carried by many media): **UN Geneva staff agree to full-day strike over pay cuts**  
<https://www.afp.com/en/news/826/un-geneva-staff-agree-full-day-strike-over-pay-cuts-doc-12146z1>
- Associated Press (and carried by many media): **UN staff in Geneva to strike over pay, austerity measures**  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/un-staff-in-geneva-to-strike-over-pay-austerity-measures/2018/03/15/c97de500-289d-11e8-a227-fd2b009466bc\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.ef946cad70aa](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/un-staff-in-geneva-to-strike-over-pay-austerity-measures/2018/03/15/c97de500-289d-11e8-a227-fd2b009466bc_story.html?utm_term=.ef946cad70aa)
- Reuters (and carried by many media): **U.N. staff in Geneva set to strike in protest at pay cut**  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-un-strike/u-n-staff-in-geneva-set-to-strike-in-protest-at-pay-cut-idUSKCN1GR2VQ>
- Tribune de Genève: **Un mouvement de grève inédit a paralysé l'ONU**  
<https://www.tdg.ch/geneve/geneve-internationale/mouvement-greve-inedit-paralyse-onu/story/23274528>
- ATS (and carried by many media): **Un appel à la grève pourrait perturber le travail de l'ONU mardi à Genève**  
<https://www.rts.ch/info/regions/geneve/9364131-un-appel-a-la-greve-pourrait-perturber-le-travail-de-l-onu-mardi-a-geneve.html>
- SRF: **Genfer UNO-Personal im Streik**  
<https://www.srf.ch/news/international/lohnkuerzung-trifft-tausende-genfer-uno-personal-im-streik>



- Swissinfo: **UN Geneva staff step up strike action over pay cut**  
[https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/pay-and-work-conditions\\_un-geneva-staff-step-up-strike-action-over-pay-cut/43976016](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/pay-and-work-conditions_un-geneva-staff-step-up-strike-action-over-pay-cut/43976016)
- L manbleu: **ONU, les fonctionnaires en gr ve (2:20)**  
<http://www.lemobleu.ch/replay/video.html?VideoID=34601>

## VI. Making the SCC stronger and more effective

### 1. Participation

The SCC strength stems from the commitment of each of its members. All SCC members have participated, each on his/her way, in advancing the SCC work programme through taking part in working groups, negotiations and networking events with other staff unions. The SCC resorted to votes in limited cases and was able all over the year under review to overcome divergence of views to work on the basis of consensus. A table showing the attendance of each SCC member in its meeting is attached as an Annex to this report.

### 2. SAFI situation and its impact on SCC activities

Many developments concerning the financial situation at SAFI will have an impact on SCC activities. For memory, SAFI has since its foundation been a Swiss-registered commercial operation that pays taxes. It benefits staff in a number of ways: by providing a convenient onsite store; by providing discounted products; and by funding a number of SCC activities.

Firstly, the Swiss tax authorities have determined that the funds SAFI provides the SCC should be treated as distribution of profit after tax rather than deductible expenses (which they were up to now) before tax. This determination was upheld recently by the tax tribunal despite the SAFI Board appeal, although other determinations were fortunately overturned. However, this unfortunately reduces any annual contribution to the SCC by 25 percent. And since this has been backdated to 2014, the result is that three years' worth of taxes were removed from SAFI's 2016 contribution to the SCC.

Secondly, a number of factors reduced sales by 10 percent between 2016 and 2017. These include a stricter parking policy limiting access by retirees and staff in other organizations, increased requirements by certain manufacturers for the display of their goods, the growth of internet shopping and a continued strong franc. In light of this and of the outcome of the recent legal appeal, this means that income to the SCC for the last year is now significantly less than forecast, standing at CHF 98,000.

Thirdly, while SAFI has been allocated an attractive and central location in the Palais for after the completion of the renovations, it would need, to minimize disruption, to move to a temporary facility during the renovations. This will in itself have an impact on costs and be disruptive commercially.

In order to address these developments, the Board is working with SAFI on business planning to integrate these developments, identify strategies to ensure the business remains viable and review income and expenditures. At the same time the Staff Coordinating SCC will be reviewing its budget (November 2018 to October 2019) next week to determine how best to integrate these developments and revise spending for items that have yet to be obligated. This will unfortunately affect funding for the time-being for clubs, humanitarian action and staff and children's parties. (With regards to the upcoming staff party, certain costs had already been contracted before the final results for SAFI were known; nevertheless, efforts have been made to find savings where possible.)

At the same time the SCC needs to ensure its financial sustainability to ensure it can maintain its strong representation activities. We therefore encourage you to consider becoming dues-paying members, both for the purpose of solidarity and for the benefits that this brings. We will also examine options to ensure a return on financial assets.

### **3. Financial management**

The Financial Commission has been in contact regularly by virtual means, allowing for the timely processing of all payments and other financial transactions. During the past year, the Finance Commission have dealt with major items as follows:

- SCC investments: the Finance Commission received several ideas on where to invest the SCC's cash reserves such as purchasing of real estate, investment in stocks, time deposit, etc., bearing in mind that the overall objective of any investment is to generate staff welfare whilst generating income to the SCC. During the latter part of the year, this idea was discontinued due to the decreased revenue flows from SAFI.
- External auditors: on their report dated 29 January 2018, they expressed an unqualified opinion on the SCC's financial statements.
- 2018-2019 budget: the Finance Commission submitted to the SCC a revised budget to reflect the reduced revenue flows from SAFI. Certain expenses had to be reduced such as official travel, annual membership fee to CCISUA, "no pay cut" campaign, humanitarian donations and several other expenses. The children's party usually scheduled during spring was being planned to be held in December. These have resulted in a revised budget that is 50% lower than what the SCC had had in previous years.
- The Finance Commission identified three bank accounts that it deemed unnecessary to keep open as they were not utilized past few years. "Assistance Juridique", "Crèche", and "Staff Gala" bank accounts were closed and their balances were all transferred to the SCC's current account. The SCC kept four bank accounts in active use for its day to day operations.

### **4. Representation at the Staff-Management Committee (SMC)**

The SCC has played an active role at the SMC. The SCC's President was re-elected to hold the position of Vice-President in the elections by UN staff unions at the last SMC in June 2018.

At SMC, unions work together in negotiating with Management. We table or contribute to briefs and positions. Our staff reps have chaired or actively participated in a number of working groups, which are currently negotiating on such important policy changes as gender parity, GSDM, misconduct, and so on.

In July 2017, the Secretary-General announced his plans for UN reform, aiming for more decentralization, more effectiveness, and increased transparency and accountability. Staff are important stakeholders in the reform, and we have engaged with Management in order to share our concerns regarding the reform process and its impact on staff.

### **5. Representation through our federation, CCISUA**

The SCC attended in May the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Assembly of the Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) in Bangkok, Thailand. During this meeting the SCC's President was also re-elected as the President of CCISUA. By now being a lead player in the Federation, we have been better able to contribute to defend your interests in various subjects such as the Pension Fund, the ICSC reform, the review of the methodologies for cost of living surveys and salary surveys for respectively P and G staff.

### **6. Relations with other staff unions in Geneva**

The SCC was able to create and maintain very good working relations with all staff unions of the Geneva based organizations. The pay cut campaign was a good opportunity to foster these relations. The SCC took the lead in planning and organizing the campaign. It also strived for coordinated actions with the FICSA federation in order to advance common causes.



## **Annex 1**

### **Work Programme**

*Mindful of the difficult times we face, the overall UN reform agenda, the Global Service Delivery Model (GSDM), and decisions of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) which are reducing pay and conditions of service in an arbitrary manner, we have resolved to prioritize the following objectives. In doing so, we will use all forms of staff-Management fora and other means available. We also affirm our belief in the importance of staff-Management relations in line with international labour standards including collective bargaining.*

#### **To protect pay, jobs and promote careers, the SCC will:**

- Campaign against the deterioration in pay and conditions for all staff, and use all means available. Challenge cuts to our pay at the UN Dispute Tribunal and advocate reform of the ICSC.
- Protect jobs in Geneva threatened by budget cuts and offshoring, ensuring retraining and reassignments, as well as voluntary buyouts and external recruitment freezes.
- Review the mobility policy in order to fix its shortcomings.
- Simplify staff selection and push for timely advertising of vacant posts.
- Advocate for G staff to be able to apply directly for P posts.

#### **To improve the work environment and support staff welfare, the SCC will:**

- Advocate for the greater use of fixed-term instead of short-term contracts.
- Improve the pension fund's governance and sustainability, while working to increase the value of pensions.
- Advocate policies to eliminate harassment, including sexual harassment and retaliation, and hold those who commit misconduct accountable for their actions.
- Review parental leave and flexible working arrangements in line with best practices.
- Push for a review of the travel policy.
- Request a review of the medical insurance credits to reflect today's higher prices.
- Push for the Palais renovations (SHP) to serve the needs of staff and the organization.
- Invest SCC funds in assets that benefit staff and diversify SCC income.
- Support staff recreational facilities.

#### **To keep staff informed and involved, the SCC will:**

- Hold regular townhalls and inform staff regularly through broadcasts.
- Survey staff on key issues and developments.



## 36<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council 36<sup>ème</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

### Annex 2

#### YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE STAFF COORDINATING COUNCIL

### Registration Form

#### Why become a dues-paying member of the Staff Coordinating Council?

The UNOG Staff Coordinating Council defends your rights as a staff member of the UN. Your Council makes sure that UN Administration pays attention to the issues that matter to you: mobility, security, salaries, etc.

Thanks to your contribution the Council also finances and makes available to your benefit:

- Staff Gala (free refreshments)
- Children's party (your kids attend for free)
- Interagency Sports Games (your participation is subsidized)
- Legal assistance (in job-related cases)
- For sale / For rent advertisement (free publication of ads)
- SAFI (access to 13% discount the day before the scheduled date)

✓ Plus 10 to 20% discounts, free services, discounted gift cards and more our partners:

**Pharmacie Populaire    5-à-sec    SPORTQUEST**  
**Ardentis-cliniques dentaires    MANOR    MATELAS TEMPUR**  
**Europcar    MyColorPhone-Online Smartphone Store    Léman Pneus Nyon**  
**Silhouette    easycycle    BYmyCAR Acacias**

More information on the exclusive offers and discounts for our members at

<http://staffcoordinatingcouncil.org/index.php/member-benefits>

Think of paying your monthly subscription of CHF 10 by automatic deduction from your salary.

All you have to do is fill in this form and return it to the Council (room C-527), where it will be forwarded to the payroll office. Thank you.

**Yes, I understand how important it is to contribute to my Staff Council and I wish to become a dues-paying member:**

Last name:	First name:	Organisation/Division:
Index #	Signature :	
Monthly contribution : CHF 10		



# 36<sup>th</sup> UNOG Staff Coordinating Council

## 36<sup>ème</sup> Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG

### Annex 3

#### Attendance at SCC meetings

Members of the SCC

SCC meetings

	1	2	3	3 bis	4	5	6	7	8	9
Adelise Dominique										
Almario Francis										
Apostolov Mario										
Bald Iain										
Baly Mohamed Chiraz										
Ben Ayed Slim										
Chantrel Dominique										
Chaoui Prisca										
Duparc Philippe										
El Garah Samira										
Funck Thomaz Samuel										
Gaziye Jamshid										
James Elizabeth										
Kalotay Kalman										
Kelly Paul										
Meyer Olivier										
Nwabuogu Gloria										
Peck Arif Catherine										
Popa Gabriela										
Richards Ian										
Rouai Slim										
Ruhana-Mukamusoni Angelique										
Smith Bradford										
Stanovic Marko										
Taporaie Amos										
Touihri Mohssen										

Present

Absent/excused

Not a member at this time





## Annex 4

### Attendance at Executive Bureau meetings

Attendance at Executive Bureau meetings

Voting members of the  
Executive Bureau

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
BALY, Mohamed Chiraz																							
CHANTREL, Dominique																							
CHAOUI, Prisca																							
GAZIYEV, Jamshid																							
KALOTAY, Kalman																							
NWABUOGU, Gloria																							
PECK ARIF, Catherine																							

Non-voting members of the  
Executive Bureau

RICHARDS, Ian																							
KELLY, Paul																							

Present



Absent/excused

